



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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INTERIOR DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES FRAMEWORK FOR WATERFOWL HUNTING

Waterfowl hunting regulations designed to hold the probable kill to this year's production, thereby assuring breeding stock for succeeding years, were issued today by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall. States will select hunting seasons and bag limits within the limits of this framework.

Restrictions were made necessary by drought which resulted in what is described as the worst breeding ground condition in 30 years. The Mississippi and Central Flyways which depend heavily upon the prairie pothole areas of Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan, were hardest hit by the breeding ground failure and have the more restrictive regulations. The Pacific and Atlantic Flyways were also adversely affected but not to so great an extent. The Pacific Flyway, having more birds per hunter than any of the other flyways was least affected by the restrictions; the Mississippi and the Central were most affected.

In brief the regulations provide:

The earliest possible opening date for duck and coot hunting in the three eastern flyways will be one week later than in 1960. The latest closing date will be one week earlier.

The goose hunting season will be 60 days instead of 70 and 75 days in the Mississippi and Central Flyways respectively, and 75 days instead of 94 in the Pacific Flyway; the Atlantic Flyway goose season also is 60 days, the same as a year ago;

A 20-day duck hunting season--the shortest season on record--is a possibility in some States;

The canvasback and redhead ducks are again fully protected;

The special management plans for goose hunting in Illinois and Wisconsin are continued with the kill increased;

The little brown crane may be hunted in specified counties in Texas and New Mexico;

That part of Montana west of the Continental Divide can be included in the Pacific Flyway if the State so desires;

The duck season will open at 12 o'clock noon, standard time; this applies also to the opening days of a split season;

Shooting hours for ducks, except on opening day, will be from sunrise to sunset on three flyways but from half an hour before sunrise to sunset on the Pacific Flyway;

Goose hunting will begin at sunrise on three flyways and at half an hour before sunrise on the Pacific Flyway, except that when goose season opens on the same day duck season opens goose hunting will begin at noon. This noon shooting does not apply to goose hunting on the opening day of the second part of a split duck season unless a goose season opens on that day.

The usual option of a split season of equal or unequal length is given with the customary penalty of ten percent in the number of days of hunting.

Thus a State with 40 consecutive days of shooting could have a split season totaling not more than 36 days.

The "outside dates" for hunting ducks and coots this year will be October 13, 1961, to December 30, 1961, inclusive for the Atlantic, Mississippi and Central Flyways. This compares with October 7, 1960, to January 8, 1961, date limits for last year's hunting season. The outside dates for ducks, coots and gallinules in the Pacific Flyway will be October 7, 1961, through January 7, 1962.

The Mississippi Flyway will have the option of 30 consecutive days with daily bag and possession limits of 2 and 4 ducks or 20 days with bag and possession limits of 3 and 6. This compares with last year's option of 40 days with a 4 and 8 ducks or 50 days with 3 and 6.

The Central Flyway will have an option of 30 consecutive days with daily bag and possession limits of 3 and 6 ducks or 40 days with 2 and 4. Last year's options were 50 days with 4 and 8 birds in daily bag and possession or 60 days with 3 and 6.

In the Atlantic Flyway the season can be 40 consecutive days with a daily bag and possession limit of 3 and 6 or 50 days with 2 and 4. The previous options had been 40 days with 4 and 8 ducks in bag and possession or 50 days with 3 and 6. Not more than 2 black ducks may be taken in the daily bag or more than 4 in possession in this flyway.

In the Pacific Flyway the season can be 75 consecutive days with bag and possession limits of 4 and 8 ducks or 5 and 5 ducks; or 60 consecutive days with bag and possession limits of 5 and 10 or 6 and 6 ducks. Last year a 90-day season was permitted. The bag and possession limits of coots and gallinules is 25, singly or in the aggregate. The goose season is 75 days instead of 94 days. In specified counties in the Columbia River Basin in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho an additional bag of 2 mallards daily and 4 in possession is allowed.

The outside dates for goose hunting will be October 1 through January 8 in the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyways and October 7 through January 7 in the Pacific Flyway. States in the three eastern flyways may choose a 60 consecutive day season or a split season of equal or unequal length with a 10 percent penalty in number of shooting days. In the Pacific Flyway a season of 75 consecutive days is permitted, or a split season with a penalty.

Redhead ducks and canvasbacks are still in such a precarious condition that they are continued on the fully protected list and shooting any of these protected species is illegal in all flyways.

One hooded merganser is allowed in bag or possession limit in each of the flyways and must be included in the limits. The bag limits for American and red-breasted mergansers are 5 daily and 10 in possession singly or in the aggregate in all flyways. These birds may be taken in addition to the other ducks.

The bag and possession limits of coots is 6 and 6 in the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyways; 25 coots and gallinules, singly or in the aggregate in bag and possession in the Pacific Flyway.

A daily bag and possession limit of 10 brant is allowed in the Atlantic Flyway and a bag and possession limit of 3 in the Pacific.

The special management plans inaugurated last year in areas in Illinois and Wisconsin are continued. This year when the kill of Canada geese in Alexander, Union, Jackson, and Williamson Counties in Illinois reaches 20,000 birds the Director of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife must close the season by notice through local information facilities. Similarly, when the combined kill of geese in Dodge, Fond du Lac and Parts of Wood, Juneau and Monroe Counties in Wisconsin reach 12,000 the Director must also close the season there.

The information upon which the Secretary based his determinations was supplied primarily by survey teams sent to the nesting areas by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Service. These teams, implemented by personnel from several States and from Canada, brought reports to indicate that nesting success this year in the major production areas was poorer than in 1959 which was rated as one of the worst seasons in three decades. A slight recovery in 1960 gave hopes that the drought cycle had been broken in the Prairie Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, but observation this year

showed that 89 percent of the ponds which were available for nesting ducks in the early 1950's were dry in 1961. The survey further showed that 67 percent of the ponds available for the nesting birds last year were dry this year. The black duck, an important species in the Atlantic Flyway, continues at a low level similar to that of recent years.

A summary by flyways follows:

Atlantic Flyway

The States in this flyway--Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia--may select concurrent open seasons on ducks (except canvasback and redhead) and coots of 40 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 3 and a possession limit of 6 for ducks, and a daily bag limit of 6 and a possession limit of 6 for coots; or 50 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 2 and a possession limit of 4 for ducks, and a daily bag limit of 6 and a possession limit of 6 for coots; or a split season (of equal or unequal length) in either option with a ten percent penalty in the number of shooting days. Not more than 2 of the ducks in the daily bag or 4 in possession can be black ducks.

The daily bag and possession limits may not include more than 2 wood ducks and 1 hooded merganser.

In addition to the bag limits on other ducks, the daily bag limit on American and red-breasted mergansers is 5 with a possession limit of 10, singly or in the aggregate of both kinds.

The States may select concurrent open seasons on brant and geese (except snow geese) of 60 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 10 and a possession limit of 10 for brant, and a daily bag limit of 2 and a possession limit of 4 for geese; or a split season (of equal or unequal length) with a ten percent penalty in the number of shooting days.

Mississippi Flyway

The States in this flyway--Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, and Wisconsin--may select concurrent open seasons on ducks (except canvasback and redhead) and coots of 30 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 2 and a possession limit of 4 for ducks, and a daily bag limit of 6 and a possession limit of 6 for coots; or 20 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 3 and a possession limit of 6 for ducks, and a daily bag limit of 6 and a possession limit of 6 for coots; or a split season in either option (of equal or unequal length) with a 10 percent penalty in the number of shooting days.

The daily bag and possession limits may not include more than one wood duck and one hooded merganser.

In addition to the bag limits on other ducks, the daily bag limit on American and red-breasted mergansers is 5 with a possession limit of 10, singly or in the aggregate of both kinds.

These States may select 60 consecutive days for geese with a bag and possession limit of 5; or split seasons (of equal or unequal length) with a 10 percent penalty in the shooting days.

In all States the bag and possession limits may not include, in the alternative, more than: (a) 2 Canada geese or subspecies; (b) 2 white-fronted geese; or (c) one Canada goose or its subspecies and one white-fronted goose.

When the combined kill in the counties of Alexander, Union, Jackson, and Williamson in Illinois reach 20,000 the season will be closed by the Director of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife by notice through local informational media. When the combined kill in the counties of Dodge, Fond du Lac and parts of Juneau, Wood and Monroe in Wisconsin totals 12,000 birds the shooting shall be similarly stopped.

Central Flyway

The States in this flyway--Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming--may select concurrent open seasons on ducks (except canvasback and redhead) and coots of 30 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 3 and a possession limit of 6 for ducks and a daily bag limit of 6 and a possession limit of 6 for coots; or 40 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 2 and a possession limit of 4 for ducks and a daily bag limit of 6 and a possession limit of 6 for coots; or a split season (of equal or unequal length) in either option with a 10 percent penalty in the number of shooting days.

The daily bag and possession limits may not include more than one wood duck and one hooded merganser. In New Mexico, however, there is no open season on wood ducks. In Texas, there will be no open season on black-bellied tree ducks. In addition to the daily bag and possession limits on other ducks, the daily bag limit on American and red-breasted mergansers is 5 with a possession limit of 10, singly or in the aggregate of both kinds.

These States may select 60 consecutive days for geese, or a split season (of equal or unequal length) with a 10 percent penalty in the number of shooting days. The daily bag and possession limits on geese will be 5. However, throughout all the States of the flyway, the bag and possession limits on geese in no event may include more than: (a) Two Canada geese or subspecies; or (b) one white-fronted goose; or (c) one Canada goose or its subspecies and one white-fronted goose. In Moffat County, Colorado, the daily bag and possession limit may not include more than one Canada goose or its subspecies. In Larimer County, Colorado, there is no open season on Canada geese. There is no open season on blue and snow geese in Wyoming, and in Beaverhead, Gallatin and Madison Counties in Montana.

The lesser sandhill crane may be hunted in specified areas in Texas and New Mexico, November 4 to December 3. The bag and possession limit is 2. The area where the hunting will be permitted has been described by the Fish and Wildlife Service as follows: The counties of Lea, Eddy, Chaves, Roosevelt, Curry, and Quay in the State of New Mexico, and that portion of the State of Texas lying west of a line from the International Toll Bridge at Del Rio, Val Verde County; thence northward following U. S. Highway 277 to its junction with U. S. Highway 87 at San Angelo, Tom Green County; thence northward along U. S. Highway 87 to the point at which it intersects the Texas-New Mexico boundary line in Dallam County.

Pacific Flyway

The States in this flyway--Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington--may select concurrent open seasons on ducks (except canvasback and redhead), coots, and gallinules of 75 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 4 and a possession limit of 8 ducks and a daily bag and possession limit of 25 coots and gallinules, singly or in the aggregate of both kinds, or an optional daily bag and possession limit of 5 ducks and a daily bag and possession limit of 25 coots and gallinules, singly or in the aggregate of both kinds; or 60 consecutive days with a daily bag limit of 5 and a possession limit of 10 ducks and a daily bag and possession limit of 25 coots and gallinules, singly or in the aggregate of both kinds, or an optional daily bag and possession limit of 6 ducks and a daily bag and possession limit of 25 coots and gallinules singly or in the aggregate of both kinds; or a split season (of equal or unequal length) in either option with a 10 percent penalty in the number of shooting days.

The daily bag and possession limits may not include more than one wood duck and one hooded merganser.

In addition to the limits on other ducks, the daily bag limit on American and red-breasted mergansers is 5 with a possession limit of 10, singly or in the aggregate of both kinds.

In the Washington counties of Adams, Acotin, Benton, Columbia, Douglas, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Kittitas, Klichitat, Lincoln, Spokane, Walla Walla, Whitman, and Yakima; in the Idaho counties of Ada, Blaine, Camas, Canyon, Cassia, Elmore, Gem, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, Owyhee, Fayette, Twin Falls, and Washington; and in the Oregon counties of Baker, Gilliam, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Walloun, and Wasco, in addition to other bag and possession limits, 2 additional mallard ducks are allowed in the daily bag limit and 4 additional mallard ducks are allowed in the possession limit.

These States will have 75 consecutive days for geese (except Ross's geese) with a daily bag and possession limit of 6, except in Washington. In Washington, the daily bag limit is 3 and possession limit is 6 geese. The daily bag limit may not include more than 3 of the dark species except in Nevada. In Nevada, except Clark County as noted below, only 2 of the dark species are permitted in the bag and possession limits.

In Mohave and Yuma counties, Arizona; in California Fish and Game District No. 22 (as defined in the California Fish and Game Code); in the entire State of Utah; and in Clark County, Nevada, the daily bag and possession limits may not include more than one Canada goose or its subspecies.

In Bear Lake, Caribou, and Bonneville counties, Idaho, the daily bag and possession limits may not include more than 2 Canada geese or subspecies.

In Clark County, Nevada; in Yuma and Mohave counties, Arizona; and in California Fish and Game District No. 22, the season on the Canada goose or its subspecies will close at sunset December 31, 1961. No open season on snow geese is prescribed in the Idaho counties of Clark, Fremont, Madison, and Teton.

These States may select a season for brant of 60 consecutive days between November 20, 1961, and January 31, 1962. The daily bag and possession limits on brant are 3.

That portion of the State of Montana, lying west of the Continental Divide, will be allowed to select open seasons for the hunting of waterfowl and coots in accordance with the frameworks prescribed for the Pacific Flyway.

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